

## Evaluation of mine action funded by the European Commission

In December 2005 the European Commission (EC) entered into an agreement with the GICHD to manage the programme of regional evaluations in order to provide systematic and objective assessments of EC-funded mine action in six regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Caucasus and Central Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East. The overall aim of these evaluations is to generate useful lessons for decision-makers within the EC, allowing them to improve the planning and management of existing and future mine action projects, programmes, and policies.

The evaluation process for each region includes a preliminary planning and data collection stage, followed by specific desk research and missions to two or three focus countries. In a final stage, analysis and reporting take place. The report gives an overview of EC mine action support to the specific region, and to particular mine-affected countries, since 2002. It usually incorporates more detailed assessments of EC mine action support in two to three ‘focus country’ cases to illustrate and support its conclusions and recommendations. Recommendations aim in particular to guide EC personnel in design and oversight of programmes that complement the actions of other mine action actors, including national authorities, other donors, and UN agencies.

Since the regional evaluations were commissioned, a number of broad reforms to the overall EC aid programme have been introduced, and these have affected mine action. As the amount of geographic and thematic instruments guiding the Community’s assistance had grown to an unmanageable number, they were replaced by six instruments: Pre-Accession Policy; European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument; Development Cooperation and Economic Cooperation policy with other countries; Instrument for Stability; Humanitarian Aid Instrument; and Macro Financial Assistance. The budget lines were also streamlined and the mine action thematic budget line ceased to exist.

Thus, while mine action continues to be important for the EC, it now competes with other areas for funds from one of the six instruments. This means it is critical for governments of mine-affected countries to acknowledge mine action as a priority to obtain EC funding. Given this background, the regional evaluations also discuss the impact of the elimination of dedicated mine action funding. Other important issues include analysing the effects of deconcentration of authority to EC Delegations to developing countries, as well as the reduction in size of the mine action units in Brussels.

The evaluation for Africa concluded that it is too early to draw full conclusions regarding the impact of deconcentration and the ending of the budget line on that region. Ongoing regional evaluations will add further evidence. The regional evaluation for Latin America is being finalized. The ones for Caucasus and Central Asia and Asia Pacific are being conducted at the moment. The evaluation of EC-funded mine action in the Middle East was sub-contracted and we are expecting the draft report in early June. Regarding

Europe, the GICHD evaluation team has just issued a request for proposals for the evaluation.

The agreement on these regional evaluations also provided that the GICHD manages a repository and dissemination service for reports from mine action evaluations and similar studies. To date, about 400 reports have been registered, with over 200 available for download. The six regional evaluation reports will of course be added to that database as they are completed and released by the EC. Reports can be searched for by country, subject, commissioning agency, evaluated organization or year at <http://www.gichd.org/links-information-database/research-and-evaluation-reports/>.

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